

## Community resources

[Follow us on Twitter](#) [Check our Reddit](#) [Twitter this](#) [Digg this page](#) [Contact us on IRC](#)

*courage is contagious*

## Viewing cable 09STATE17263, MULTILATERAL AEGEAN EXERCISE EGEMEN

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

### Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

### Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#09STATE17263**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
<a href="#">09STATE17263</a>	<a href="#">2009-02-25 02:49</a>	<a href="#">2011-08-30 01:44</a>	<a href="#">CONFIDENTIAL</a>	<a href="#">Secretary of State</a>

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.tanea.gr>

VZCZCXYZ0000  
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHC #7263 0560305  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O P 250249Z FEB 09  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE 0000  
RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE 0000  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 0000  
INFO NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY 0000  
RUEHNC/AMEMBASSY NICOSIA PRIORITY 0000  
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY 0000  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY 0000

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 017263

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/24/2019  
TAGS: [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [GR](#) [TU](#) [UK](#)  
SUBJECT: MULTILATERAL AEGEAN EXERCISE EGEMEN

REF: A. ATHENS-EMB. ANKARA-EUR/SE EMAILS. (2/6)  
[1](#)B. ANKARA 278

Classified By: EUR: DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY MATTHEW BRYZA

11. (C) THIS IS AN ACTION REQUEST. PLEASE SEE PARAGRAPH 8.

12. (C) SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND: FROM MARCH 13-30, A TURKEY-UK PLANNED MULTILATERAL EXERCISE, EGEMEN ("SOVEREIGN") IS SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE IN THE AEGEAN. THE U.S. IS SCHEDULED TO PARTICIPATE (ONE SHIP, USS MITSCHER) ALONG WITH THE NETHERLANDS AND BELGIUM. THE USS MITSCHER WILL BE UNDER TACTICAL CONTROL (TACON) OF THE UK.

13. (C) ON FEBRUARY 6, 2009 THE GOVERNMENT OF GREECE (GOG) RAISED SEVERAL CONCERNS ABOUT THE EXERCISE WITH EMBASSY ATHENS (REF A). THESE CONCERNS INCLUDED:

(A) MAPS TURKEY INAPPROPRIATELY DISTRIBUTED VIA THE NATO "CRONOS" SYSTEM THAT DEPICT DEMILITARIZED ISLANDS AND SEARCH AND RESCUE RESPONSIBILITIES, BOTH OF WHICH GREECE DISPUTES,

(B) PLANNED AREAS OF OPERATION FOR THE EXERCISE THAT CLEARLY FALL WITHIN GREEK SOVEREIGN TERRITORY,

(C) A SEARCH AND RESCUE (SAR) COMPONENT OF THE EXERCISE THAT DOES NOT INCLUDE COORDINATION WITH ATHENS' FLIGHT INFORMATION REGION (FIR), AND

(D) CONCERN THAT THE OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR THE EXERCISE INCLUDES TRANSIT OF GREEK TERRITORIAL WATERS, ACCEPTABLE FOR COMMERCIAL AND CIVILIAN TRANSIT, BUT WHICH IS NOT ACCEPTABLE FOR MILITARY VESSELS WITHOUT SPECIFIC GREEK PERMISSION, WHICH HAS NOT BEEN REQUESTED.

14. (C) THE USG BELIEVES THAT TWO OF THESE FOUR CONCERNS (B AND D) ARE CLEARLY LEGITIMATE AND NEED TO BE ADDRESSED PRIOR TO THE START OF THE EXERCISE. IF THEY ARE NOT CORRECTED, THEY COULD INFRINGE UPON GREECE'S SOVEREIGN TERRITORY IN CONTRAVENTION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW. AS CO-PLANNERS OF THE EXERCISE, THE USG BELIEVES THAT THE UK AND TURKEY SHOULD HAVE THE LEAD IN RESOLVING THESE CONCERNS. (NOTE: WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE UK MAY BELIEVE THAT IT IS TURKEY'S RESPONSIBILITY TO RESOLVE THE GREEK CONCERNS AS IT WAS TURKEY'S MAPS, INAPPROPRIATELY SENT OVER THE NATO SYSTEM, WHICH GREECE DISPUTES AND WHICH ORIGINALLY RAISED GOG CONCERNS. END NOTE)

15. (C) TWO OF GREECE'S CONCERNS, IN THE U.S. VIEW, SHOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH MOVING FORWARD ON THE EXERCISE. FIRST, THE USG DOES NOT VIEW TURKEY'S DISTRIBUTION OF MAPS ON THE NATO "CRONOS" SYSTEM AS LEGITIMIZING TURKISH (OR GREEK) CLAIMS IN THE AEGEAN. SECOND, WITH REGARD TO CONCERNS OVER THE SAR COMPONENT OF THE EXERCISE TAKING PLACE WITHIN ATHENS' FIR, THE 1994 ICAO CONVENTION DOES NOT REQUIRE STATE AIRCRAFT TO FILE FLIGHT PLANS WITHIN THE FIR, ALTHOUGH THEY ARE REQUIRED TO FLY "WITH DUE REGARD TO SAFETY." WHILE THE FIR IS TYPICALLY USED AS A BASIS FOR SAR REGIONS, THIS IS NOT NECESSARILY REQUIRED. IN THIS CASE, WHILE IT RECOGNIZES GREECE'S FIR, TURKEY HAS NOT RECOGNIZED GREECE'S SAR REGION. THEREFORE, THERE IS NO INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED MARITIME SAR REGION IN MUCH OF THIS AREA. THE USG HAS NOT PREVIOUSLY WEIGHED IN ON THIS LONGSTANDING AEGEAN DISPUTE. WE BELIEVE IT IS NOT IN THE USG'S INTEREST TO DO SO NOW. EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE TAKEN BY TURKEY AND THE UK TO ENSURE THE SAR COMPONENT OF THE EXERCISE TAKES PLACE IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS OR TURKISH TERRITORIAL WATERS.

16. (SBU) THE U.S. BELIEVES THE TWO LEGITIMATE CONCERNS RAISED BY THE GOG CAN EASILY BE RESOLVED. THE U.S. IS CONTINUING WITH PLANS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE EXERCISE UNDER UK TACON, PENDING RESOLUTION OF THESE ISSUES IN ACCORDANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL LAW AND PRACTICE. THE GOG HAS INDICATED TO THE U.S. THAT IT CAN ACCEPT THE EXERCISE AS LONG AS ITS CONCERNS ARE MET (REF. C) THE U.S. BELIEVES THAT PULLING OUT OF THE EXERCISE AT THIS LATE DATE WOULD LIKELY INCREASE AEGEAN TENSIONS AND THEREFORE, THE BEST COURSE OF ACTION IS TO HAVE THE UK TAKE THE LEAD WITH THE TURKS IN RESOLVING THE TWO KEY ISSUES.

17. (C) OBJECTIVE: EMBASSIES SHOULD NOTE U.S. SUPPORT FOR GOING FORWARD WITH THE EXERCISE IN A WAY THAT ADDRESSES THE TWO LEGITIMATE CONCERNS RAISED BY GREECE. SPECIFICALLY, THE U.S. BELIEVES THAT THE UK AND TURKEY, AS CO-PLANNERS, SHOULD AMEND THE EXERCISE AS NECESSARY TO AVOID INFRINGEMENT OF GREECE'S SOVEREIGN TERRITORY (SPECIFICALLY, CHANGING THE EXERCISE AREA SUCH THAT IT DOES NOT CROSS INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED SOVEREIGN GREEK TERRITORY), AND ENSURE THE SAR PORTION OF THE EXERCISE TAKES PLACE IN INTERNATIONAL OR TURKISH WATERS.

18. (SBU) ACTION REQUEST: DEPARTMENT REQUESTS EMBASSY LONDON RAISE THE EGEMEN EXERCISE WITH APPROPRIATE UK OFFICIALS TO URGE THAT THE UK, AS CO-PLANNER, GOES FORWARD WITH THE EXERCISE IN A WAY THAT ADDRESSES THE TWO LEGITIMATE CONCERNS RAISED BY GREECE. EMBASSIES ANKARA AND ATHENS SHOULD DRAW UPON THE BELOW POINTS IN DISCUSSIONS WITH HOST GOVERNMENT AND UK OFFICIALS AS APPROPRIATE.

FOR USE WITH HMG OFFICIALS ONLY:

-THE U.S. IS PLEASED TO PARTNER IN THE MULTILATERAL EXERCISE EGEMEN WITH THE UK (UNDER UK TACON) AND TURKEY AS CO-HOSTS OF THE EXERCISE AND OUR OTHER ALLIES INVOLVED.

-THOUGH THE GOG HAS RAISED CONCERNS WITH US REGARDING THIS EXERCISE, WE HAVE ENCOURAGED THE GOG TO WORK THROUGH THE UK AND TURKEY DIRECTLY, AS CO-PLANNERS OF THE EXERCISE TO RESOLVE GREECE'S LEGITIMATE CONCERNS.

-THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH OUR DESIRE THAT GREECE AND TURKEY CONSULT DIRECTLY TO RESOLVE AEGEAN DIFFERENCES.

-OUR PREFERENCE IS FOR THE UK AND TURKEY TO GO FORWARD WITH THE EXERCISE IN A WAY THAT ADDRESSES TWO OF THE CONCERNS THE GREEKS HAVE RAISED THAT WE BELIEVE NEED TO BE ADDRESSED. WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT CANCELLING THE EXERCISE AT THIS LATE DATE WOULD LIKELY INCREASE AEGEAN TENSIONS.

-SPECIFICALLY, THE U.S. URGES THE UK TO SEEK WAYS TO RESOLVE THE CONCERNS REGARDING AREAS OF OPERATION CLEARLY WITHIN GREEK SOVEREIGN TERRITORY AND TRANSIT OF GREEK TERRITORIAL WATERS BY VESSELS PARTICIPATING IN A MILITARY EXERCISE. BOTH OF THESE COULD POSSIBLY INFRINGE ON GREECE'S SOVEREIGN TERRITORY, IN CONTRAVENTION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW.

-WITH REGARD TO GREECE'S OTHER CONCERNS, THE U.S. BELIEVES THE REVISED EXERCISE SHOULD TAKE CARE TO ENSURE THAT ALL PORTIONS OF THE EXERCISE (ESPECIALLY THE SAR PORTION) TAKE PLACE IN TURKISH TERRITORIAL WATERS OR IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS TO ENSURE IT DOES NOT INFRINGE IN ANY WAY ON GREEK SOVEREIGN TERRITORY.

FOR EMBASSIES LONDON, ATHENS AND ANKARA TO USE WITH HOST COUNTRY AND UK OFFICIALS AS APPROPRIATE:

-THE USG PARTICIPATES IN MULTILATERAL EXERCISES WORLDWIDE, WITH OUR PARTNERS AND ALLIES.

-AT THE INVITATION OF TURKEY AND THE UK, THE USG PLANS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MULTILATERAL EXERCISE EGEMEN, WITH ONE SHIP UNDER THE TACTICAL CONTROL OF THE UK COMMANDER.

-GREEK CONCERNS REGARDING THE EGEMEN SHOULD BE RAISED DIRECTLY WITH THE UK AND TURKEY AS CO-PLANNERS OF THE EXERCISE.

-THE USG RESPECTS GREECE'S AND TURKEY'S SOVEREIGN TERRITORY, BUT ALSO REITERATES THE NEED TO RE-ENERGIZE BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS TO RESOLVE OUTSTANDING DISPUTES IN THE AEGEAN.

-THE USG DOES NOT RECOGNIZE THE MAPS DISTRIBUTED VIA THE NATO CRONOS SYSTEM AS LEGITIMIZING ANY AEGEAN LITTORAL STATE'S INTERPRETATION OF EITHER DEMILITARIZED ISLANDS OR SEARCH AND RESCUE RESPONSIBILITIES.

CLINTON